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STURGIS, KENTUCKY, A TENTATIVE DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS. FIELD REPORTS ON DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH, FR. 3.

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THIS REPORT OF A FIELD STUDY DESCRIBES THE 1956 CONFLICT WHICH OCCURRED IN A SMALL KENTUCKY TOWN AS A RESULT OF A SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS. THE REPORT CONTAINS (1) A SUMMARY OF THE OPINIONS IN THE COMMUNITY ABOUT RACE RELATIONS, SPECIFICALLY NEGRO OPINIONS, (2) A DISCUSSION OF THE ATTITUDES OF THE LOCAL PRESS, CIVIC OFFICIALS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS, (3) A DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN SEGREGATIONISTS, (4) INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY ECOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHY, AND (5) A CHRONOLOGY OF THE SCHOOL DESEGREGATION CRISIS. (NH)

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FIELD REPORTS ON DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

STURGIS, KENTUCKY:

A Tentative Description and Analysis of the School Desegregation Crisis

UD 005 818

by

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STURGIS, KENTUCKY: A Tentative Description and Analysis of the School Desegregation Crisis

General Opinions in the Community

The community involved is a consolidated school district surrounding the town of Sturgis. It is my judgment that there is a small numerical minority who would choose no education at all for their children rather than to have it occur under conditions of racial desegregation. The majority oppose desegregation, but recognize the authority of the Supreme Court and the value of education for their children and will accept educational desegregation. There is a small minority, probably smaller than the extreme pro-segregationists, who believe that desegregation is right and must come. Some evidence of the majority acceptance of desegregation is indicated by the fact that by Sept. 14, attendance by white children both in the high school and grade school was approaching normal. despite the presence both of the National Guard forces and the eight Negro students in the high school.

However, the boycott by white students was rekindled by a White Citizens Council meeting in Morganfield, Ky. (Union County's county-seat town) on Sept. 15, and by a much larger meeting sponsored by the same group at the fairgrounds in Sturgis on Monday night, Sept. 17. Attendance in the high school was down to about 50 whites and eight Negroes on Tuesday. Undoubtedly many Sturgis people concluded that the 100 per cent boycott by whites of the Clay School in nearby Webster County was responsible for the ruling by State Attorney General Jo Ferguson, which enabled the school board of that county to bar legally on Monday the four Negro children who had been attending school there.

Race relations in the community, historically, are described as friendly by both white and Negroes. But one who asks a few well chosen questions and keeps his eyes open can hardly avoid the conclusion that these peaceable relations have been almost strictly those of a caste order. Acquiescence of Negroes to the dominant position of the whites was the condition of the peace. With the exception of some coal mines in which Negroes and whites work without apparent discrimination against the former, race relations have been ordered strictly according to caste principle. Long-time residents indicate there has been no history of any interracial contacts in the area of sports, churches or social affairs. Negroes have "stayed in their place" and whites in theirs.

Sentiments in the community appear to be solidly opposed to any resort to violence. When the National Guard arrived with all of its implements of violence, some members of the crowds attempted to express their anger in ways involving more than words. Generally throughout the community one encounters such statements as "the last thing we want is violence." Clearest testimony for this conclusion seems to me to reside in the simple but dramatic fact that at no time during these two weeks of tension were any Negroes molested physically. There was not even a cross-burning either in Sturgis or nearby Clay. Personally, I do not believe that the presence of the National Guard is the explanation for the absence of such violence, for it would not have been difficult for some

angry whites to have burned or dynamited a home. The Guard was not everywhere. News stories and my own experience indicate, however, that there was much verbalization of hostility directed towards both the Negro students and the Guard forces.

The immediate future for desegregation is not clear. I suspect that this crisis will retard voluntary acceptance. However, it is almost certain that some plans will be made by the Union County School Board. Dunbar High School for Negroes in Morganfield is scheduled to be closed in 1957 because of an enrollment under 100. But this county is not significantly different from the rest of Western Kentucky, so far as I can judge. In nummerous school districts in this part of the state. desegregation is already in process. I, therefore, see no reason why it should not be accomplished in Union County though perhaps more slowly than elsewhere. This. of course, assumes that no Federal court order will be forthcoming in the near future requiring the readmittance of Negro students both in Sturgis and Clay.

Should such a court order be issued applicable to this school year, I would expect much further difficulty. The growth of a White Citizens Council in this area, with effective leadership and successful experience with the boycott, is ground for expecting considerable resistance to any further immediate attempts at desegregation. Such resistance can be countered undoubtedly by injunctions against further meetings of such an organization, and the enforcement of the school attendance law, plus an expanded police force or presence of National Guard units. But acceptance on these terms is not what we are hoping for.

Opinions Among Negroes

My opinion sampling among the Negro population cannot be described as "representative." But several lengthy conversations with an "elder" of the community, plus freely expressed opinions of a number of Negro mothers, none of whom had children attempting to enter the Sturgis School, indicated a firm conviction that they believe educational segregation must come to an end. Expressions such as, "What's the matter with those white-folk?" and "I simply don't understand the way they're acting," typify their reactions to conflict. I talked with none who thought that continued segregation should order the educational experiences of their children.

In discussing community opinions generally, I indicated that relations had been peaceful between the two racial groups within the caste system. During the early part of the week of Sept. 16, I observed Negroes making purchases in stores and being treated courteously. At the railroad station, a group of white and Negro track workers were assembling for a meeting on track safety, and I noted all were listening to the sales-talk of an itinerant jewelry salesman trying to convince them that Christmas was just around the corner, and they should buy now on easy, no money down terms. But the old easiness of their relations within the rigid lines of separation that had been dominant in the past is undoubtedly gone. A new tenseness must be expected until such time as accommodation to a new pattern of relations can be achieved. I am of the opinion that the whites in general are not aware that the Negroes are dissatisfied with their status and bent upon change. And likewise it is probable that Negroes are not aware of how deeply imbedded in some of their white friends is the belief in the "rightness of segregation" and the emotional support to maintain the historic "place" relations of the races.

I have not learned of any plans to provide extra protection for the Negro community once the Guard is withdrawn. Prevention of physical retaliation may thus depend upon the extent to which the pro-segregation leaders desire to prevent violence and exert

discipline over their followers. But as I've indicated previously, opposition to use of violence is wide-spread among the whites and I am, therefore, of the opinion that this will operate as an internal control to maintain order. However, there have been so many surprise developments in this conflict, that the next newscast may provide unpleasant evidence of the error of my forecast.

During the first week of this crisis, word got out that economic sanctions were going to fall upon the fathers of some of the Negro children involved. These were men employed in the coal mines and as a result, several of the students did not show up for school that day. I was informed by a Negro couple that this threat apparently was made by some mine employee who lacked power either to hire or fire. When word of this reached the level of higher authority in the mine, the responsible official immediately let it be known that the person making such a threat was out of order and the Negroes need not fear loss of their jobs. The next day the absent Negro children returned to school. This occurred in a mine which is interracial in its employment policies. On several occasions I heard it said that this conflict must not grow between the two racial groups in the mines for reasons of their mutual responsibility for each other's safety on the job.

The point at which the non-violence of the whites would have been tested to its fullest was on Tuesday, Sept. 4, when the Negro students who had enrolled on the previous Friday, August 31, approached the Sturgis High School. News reports state that their advance toward the school was blocked by a crowd of perhaps 300 persons, mostly women. As they approached the school some spokesman for the crowd called out that they should turn around and go back to their own school in Morganfield. The students halted their advance, talked it over, and returned home. What would have happened had they continued their walk toward the school in which they were legally enrolled? That's the 64-dollar question. My own guess is that they would not have been molested at that time, since all local acounts indicate it was not an angry crowd, and certainly not a "mob."

Had the issue of the National Guard not come into the picture I believe a sizable proportion of the whites would have stood for law and order. It was apparently after the Guard came to town that tempers began to boil and hostility spread throughout the populace. However, my judgment here is obviously in contradiction to that of Adj. General Williams and several other station officials. The crucial question is, what would have happened had the Negro students attempted to enter school on the 4th of September or had they returned on the 5th? The fact that Supt. of Schools Carlos Oakley did not call for city police to be on hand on the 5th presents two possible interpretations: One, he was convinced that the Negroes had been duly forced back into "their place" by the presence of the crowd on the 4th and would not dare to return. The other possibility is that he believed the crowd was composed basically of law-abiding persons who accepted the ultimate authority of the Supreme Court and would therefore not try to take the law into their own hands. The editor of a paper in a nearby county informed me after I left Sturgis that Union County school officials had not anticipated any difficulties in Sturgis. The very fact that Supt. Oakley had given approval to the entrance of Negroes in Sturgis, and that it had been announced earlier that Dunbar H. S. was to be closed in 1957, indicates to me that the Superintendent was convinced the Sturgis crowd would choose law and order though they disliked intensely the idea of integration. Newspaper accounts indicate that the crowd on the 4th offered no verbal objections to Oakley's statements that the Board of Education was willing to permit the attendance

of Negroes at any time in the Sturgis school and that "Kentucky would abide by the Supreme Court decision."

Anyone who has seen this little band of eight Negro students surrounded by a hostile crowd of several hundred whites, or has seen them in their own homes as I did, must conclude that if they were fearful of physical assault they had their fears under control. When it was learned among the reporters and other observers with whom I was associated in Sturgis, that these students were to be officially banned from school on Wednesday morning, there was more than one person who paid humble tribute to the courage of these kids and wondered if they themselves would have had the courage to face such a crowd.

That Negro parents will press for desegregation has been made evident already by the willingness of several of them to be involved in the legal procedures that are necessary if there is to be any final victory for their cause.

Attitudes of Local Press

The only local paper is a weekly. I have seen so far only the issue of Sept. 13. One-half of the front page was given to a commentary entitled "Sturgis, Ky.—Population 2,222—Guinea Pig or Goat?" This was devoted mainly to stating facts in the case as reported elsewhere by writers judged to be reliable by the editor. In view of the various rumors and distortions of fact floating about the town this was advisable.

Although I had not the opportunity to talk directly with him while I was in Sturgis, some of the editor's attitudes and judgments about the people of his community can be indicated by the following quotes from the issue of the 13th. Regarding integration: "We all know integration must take place in the future, it has been so decreed by the Supreme Court of the nation. But as so many have said here in recent days, 'we must be allowed to do it in OUR OWN way." Regarding Negroes: "There is no great resentment here against the Negro. In fact the Sturgis Negro has access anywhere in the city at any time, even as this is being written." Peaceableness of the crowds: "They (local citizens) were not prepared for it (integration), so some gathered—and we say again, peacefully— to protest it. Their acts were inflamed by newspaper headlines and stories, and when the governor sent in troops, reason went out, as resentment and anger came in." "There were no acts of violence (on Sept. 4), no inciting speeches, no one with weapons, not even as much as a stick in their hand."

On the ability of local officials to handle the situation, Editor Calman, Sr., said: "So you—and we—ask what local authorities had not been able to deal with the disturbances? The local police had not asked for help. The country sheriff's office had not asked for any help. The county judge had not asked for any help. The local mayor did not ask for help and told General Williams that we did NOT NEED troops, and if we were left alone would work out the problem."

Regarding the White Citizens Council: "We don't agree with the meetings such as were held at the city park and at Morganfield. They were not sponsored by local parents who are most concerned with what is going to happen here. They were sponsored by a man from Louisville, a man from Tennessee, a man from Morganfield."

Civic Officials

The only official of the city whose position was publicly expressed was that of Mayor J. B. Holeman. I was unable to talk with him personally but did hear him speak most courageously at the White Citizens Council meeting at the Sturgis Fairgrounds on

Monday, Sept. 17. Without committing himself for or against integration, he let it be known without hesitation that he believed the Supreme Court ruling must be followed and would come eventually, regardless of such meetings, boycotts, etc. He was opposed to starting desegregation at the high school level, preferring to begin with the first grade and proceeding gradually from that point. His own son, who was a high school student, continued to attend school throughout the entire crisis. I write with admiration for his courage in publicly taking this position in the presence of a crowd which was overwhelmingly opposed to his position. But he was with the crowd in opposing the entrance of the National Guard and State Police.

Law Enforcement Agencies

The principal agents of law enforcement involved were those of the National Guard. Local officials apparently played no role at all although several had been on hand on Sept. 4 when the Negro students were advised to go to their Morganfield school by a spokesman for a large crowd at the Sturgis High School.

The principal officer of the Guard was Adj. Gen. of Kentucky, Maj. Gen. J. J. B. Williams. Apparently it was Gen. Williams' judgment that local authorities were not able to deal with the disturbance which led to the entrance of the National Guard and the State Police. At a meeting with local and county officials on Sept. 5, after the Negro students and their parents had agreed to return to Dunbar H. S. for this year, Gen. Williams was told by each official that there was no need to bring in the National Guard. The General is reported as having told them that the decision was his alone to make. And on that night the troops moved in.

Gen. Williams lives in Somerset, a town in Eastern Kentucky which has planned and implemented desegregation quite successfully. I am sure that desegregation would have met with considerable difficulty in that area had Gen. Williams opposed it. Thus it was not only his role as Adjutant General, but also his personal sense of values, which caused him to describe the Sturgis integration incident as, "A showdown as far as the State of Kentucky is concerned." And to say further, "It's a matter of principle whether the Supreme Court is the law of the land or not." (C-J, 9/7/56)

Another important person representing state law enforcement agencies was Ben Sturgill, Deputy Safety Commissioner. Before going to Frankfort for conferences on the 6th with Governor Chandler, Mr. Sturgill said: "If we can stop this here we feel we can stop it (disturbances) anywhere else in the state." (N. Y. Times, 9/7/56)

There is considerable evidence to conclude that state authorities from the Governor on down are committed to bringing about compliance with the Supreme Court decision. That they support law and order is revealed by the use of 600 fully armed National Guardsmen.

Previously, I have indicated that the entrance of the Guard was not at the request of local or county officials. Although such an action is productive of anything but harmony in the relations of local and state officialdom, it is nevertheless entirely legal within Kentucky state law. To read the newspaper accounts and to be an eyewitness during the latter stages of these disturbances, forces one to the conclusion that this action by state officials created tremendous resentment and hostility. It is possible that much of the verbal hostility directed towards the Negro students is but a transference of the hostility created by the entrance of the Guard and not otherwise expressible.

There is, thus, a serious question of the diplomacy of the state officials. They, of

course, were confronted by the fact that local white citizens were defying the intentions of the state government to go ahead with desegregation. Further, it seemed apparent that local authorities were not going to guarantee to the Negroes the previous agreement permitting them to attend Sturgis High. Faced with the first open opposition in the state to desegregation, these officials undoubtedly believed they had to quell resistance immediately or face the possibility of it spreading elsewhere in the state.

But in the light of later events, the opportunity of the Negroes to attend the Sturgis High has been forfeited, at least for the time being. It is now apparent that state officials have passed the brunt of the issue to the Federal courts and it will now fall to some Federal judge to decide whether the students should be admitted immediately or to require that more adequate plans be developed. If the decision is for immediate enrollment, I can only wonder how the decision will be enforced and by whom.

School Officials

The events of the days when I was in Sturgis were too crowded for me to have an opportunity to determine whether the school officials personally hold attitudes favorable to desegregation. Their public utterances have all been in line with the fact that they are a part of the state system of public education which is committed to accepting the Supreme Court decision as the law of the land.

Though apparently not widely known, the School Board of the county expected that in 1957, Dunbar High School would be closed and all Negro students integrated into Sturgis or Morganfield High School. Further, Supt. Oakley, speaking apparently with School Board approval, had indicated that Negroes were entitled to attend Sturgis High if they wished to do so. The principal of the Sturgis School had stated at the time of enrollment of the eight Negro students that they would be treated like anyone else. We thus have the background of an intent to implement the desegregation decision, though no evidence on personal attitudes of responsible school officials is at hand.

That they expected desegregation to work is indicated by the apparent casualness with which the application to admit Negroes to the Sturgis School was granted. Back of this is no history of consultations, planning, discussions, etc., which have been the accompaniment of so many successful desegregation ventures. One informant told me that in the fall of 1955 some local Sturgis Negro boys accepted an invitation to engage in football scrimmage with the Sturgis High team in anticipation that they would be attending the high school soon. Eventual acceptance of desegregation by the students is indicated by the fact that by Sept. 14, a large proportion of the high school students had returned to classes. Reporters noted frequently, as did this observer, that staying away from school was for many an unexpected vacation, for many others it was a matter of not wanting to be in a minority, and for still others the presence of the troops was certainly an obstacle.

The public school teachers of Kentucky, in general, have already indicated their desire and willingness to accept desegregation by such acts as the various moves involved in merging the Kentucky Education Assocation with the Kentucky Teachers Association, the Negro organization of teachers. Many of these teachers have attended summer classes at the University of Kentucky which has had many Negro teachers registered during the last five years or so. To my knowledge, no Sturgis teacher indicated a preference for resigning rather than teaching in an integrated school, as was the case of several teachers at Clay.

Group Identification of Pro-Segregationists

I have little direct information with which to attempt an answer to the questions in this section. The leaders of the segregationists are easily identified in socio-economic terms from available public information. But conclusions concerning the followers are, at best, a "guesstimate."

The president of the White Citizens Council at Union City is W. W. "Jerry" Waller of Morganfield, the county-seat town. He is a partner in a farm implement business, 33 years old. War II veteran, old line stock in a county where everyone seems to be such, and potentionally a powerful leader of segregation forces. He is, at least, upper middle class.

The vice-president is the owner of a furniture and appliance store in Sturgis. I believe his name is Bell. He did not figure prominently in the crisis so far as I can judge. He is probably upper middle class.

An important personage is a mine union official of the area by the name of Gordon Urten, from, I suspect is one of the most important figures in the whole development. He was called on by the crowd on Sept. 4 to tell Supt. Oakley their position. I heard him speak for CBS-TV filming on Sept. 19, and he did it most creditably without any advance preparation. Someone did some organizing in Sturgis between Aug. 31 and Sept. 4, and I strongly suspect it was he who was involved, though I have no proof. (In fact I could learn very little about that period; one informant indicated there was considerable telephoning and pressuring to keep children out of school and to be on hand.) Perhaps one reason why this person did not figure more prominently was because the U.M.W. from Washington headquarters let it be known in strong terms it wanted no union functionary mixing union status with pro-segregation activities.

The crowd of followers appeared to me as distinctly lower class or working class. Such events always attract the unemployed, the retired, and rural people whose farming tasks are not too pressing. Women apparently made up at least half the crowds during the early days in Sturgis though they were not so apparent during the period I was on hand, except for the 19th when they were out in force. One reporter indicated that they were more hostile and threatening at Clay than any of the men. If the one woman I heard speak for the CBS-TV reporters is typical, they were certainly less restrained in their hostility and more open in expressing their prejudice than were the men. I noted that at the big Citizens Council meeting on the 17th, women were the most vocal in their cheering. (Incidentally, this meeting produced less cheering, hooting, noise, boisterousness, etc. than I had anticipated. In my judgment, it was surprisingly sober.)

As one index of class composition of the segregationists, I noted in the crowd that was present the day the Negro students were officially refused entrance, Sept. 19, only two males in business suits were identifiable as members of the segregation supporters.

One informant who supported desegregation told me that "none of the good Christian people of the community would be caught at such an affair." He also stated his belief that a large portion of the people present had no children in the school, and in a number of cases, were from outside the community.

One person who undoubtedly played an important role in organizing the opposition was Millard Grubbs who came by plane from Louisville to address one of the first, if not the first, mass meeting of the segregation advocates. He is state chairman of the Kentucky White Citizens Council and will undoubtedly be no little source of difficulty for us in the months ahead. I know nothing of his socio-economic status in Louisville, though he is certainly not prominent there in the way W. W. Waller is in Morganfield.

Mob Process

I was not present when the mobs were alleged to be on hand. There is some question whether this term should be used, for the National Guard forces were too well in control of the situation when it might have developed into mob behavior beginning on Sept. 6. One factor which may have prevented strong mob formation was that Gordon Urten, whom I identified previously as having had mine union organization background and connection, was singled out early by National Guard officials, so much so that he later complained of being used by Gen. Williams as someone to pin blame on and make an example of. On Sept. 6, some seven men were arrested on breach of peace charges by State Highway Police.

Interesting Hypothesis

My interviewing experience would certainly lend support to the hypothesis that those opposing desegregation do so on grounds that it is necessary to prevent intermarriage. And, those who accept it think in terms of widening educational opportunities for all, and of what benefits the Negro students may bring to the school in terms of such activities as athletics and music.

Some Miscellaneous Questions

I have not learned of any recent incidents in the town which may have been related to this disturbance. All seems to have been peaceful in the caste pattern.

I do not believe those who participated in the action were in any way sorry. Perhaps had open violence occurred, feelings of sorrow might have been present. The main feeling which I sensed was one of continuing anxiety due to general awareness that this was but one chapter in the struggle, and likely to be only a temporary victory. I think there are very few among those opposed to desegregation who see this as a final and lasting victory for their cause. They are cognizant that all around them, and throughout the state, desegregation is moving forward and that compliance with the court ruling is generally accepted in the state.

Regarding the firmness of officials, it can be said that the school officials apparently did not say much ahead of time, but appeared to be firm about the right of Negroes to enter Sturgis High School with School Board approval as late as Sept. 4.

Community Ecology and Demography

Sturgis, Ky. has a population of about 2500 and is located in a fairly prosperous agricultural section and draws additional economic support from several large-scale coal mining operations. Contrary to most of the other mining sections of Kentucky, some long-range expansion seems in sight with the opening of one new major mine. Within the town of Sturgis are several small industries, mainly employing women. One is a branch of the Richmond Clothing Co., and another is manufacturing television tubes.

Within Union County, there are 1,386 Negroes (U. S. Census, 1950) and within the town of Sturgis, about 350. I spent a good deal of time in the Negro section known as Boxtown. I am of the opinion that their level of living is somewhat above the average of that of most Kentucky Negroes. This is probably due to the fact that a large proportion of the men work in the mines where pay scales are reputed to be about $20 per day as a minimum—even in the unorganized mines.

To one who has lived a number of years in Iowa and Illinois, Sturgis appears to

be similar to a small town in one of those states. Streets are wide and well kept; lined with lovely trees and neat small homes. The town boasts some nine churches, though I do not know how well they are attended.

Long time residents of the area regard it as a growing and progressive town.

Some Conclusions and Questions Derived From the Sturgis Analysis

The major questions for those concerned with implementing integration, are those relating to the lessons to be learned from this conflict situation. Each analyst may draw somewhat differing statements of the lessons, for they are not implicit in the data; but for what they are worth, here are some conclusions which I draw from my field work experience:

1. It is of the greatest importance to keep on gathering and disseminating information descriptive of successful experiences with integration. Many of the segregationists do not realize the extent to which this is occurring. Their strength will be lessened as they see themselves more of a minority, though their resistance may temporarily increase.

2. The interaction of (1) inadequate planning; (2) little experience with interracial contact and communication; (3) eagerness of Negroes to break the segregation barriers; and (4) the hostility of caste-oriented whites, particularly those of lower socio-economic status, offers a high probability of open conflict over integration.

3. Those whose responsibility it is to promote integration, namely school officials, must act with firmness and forthrightness. In Kentucky, the opportunity is great because local authorities do not have to go counter to the position of state officials. Failure to exert leadership offers the segregationists a wide-open opportunity.

4. It seems advisable to me that no effort should be made to enroll Negro children where no plans have been made. The first steps should be in terms of discussion, pressure on the school board, and court procedure. Open conflict of the type which took place at Clay and Sturgis will release far more hostility than when issues are channeled through the courts.

5. I believe it would be unwise to push legal action rapidly in *some* cases. I premise this conclusion on the assumption that the opposition will soften with time, but may greatly harden with a reason for further immediate action.

6. In view of the fact that integration has gone forward without difficulty elsewhere in Kentucky where the school boards and officials have done no more planning, etc. than at Clay and Sturgis, it is apparent that we cannot place the entire responsibility for these conflicts upon the lack of planning. Other variables are certainly involved.

7. In the light of the previous statement, it is probable that we ought to study the cases of successful integration and lack of planning in a further effort to isolate controlling variables.

One goes into such developments as those taking place at Sturgis in order to answer some questions, but of course, experiencing the situation is productive of further questions. Here are a few that have developed in my thinking:

1. Have we any clear evidence to show that integration goes forward more smoothly where there is present in the community some history of interracial contacts other than those involved in employment and buying and selling? Are contacts through sports, church visitations, joint committees, etc. productive of attitudes and personal relations which will expedite desegregation?

2. Why did no violence break out in either of these communities? Was it due to the presence of the Guard? Are these communities really as peaceable as some of their members claim? Has there developed a socio-economic situation which is basically satisfying to the whites and therefore keeps frustration and aggression at a minimum?

3. Why have the White Citizens Councils not flourished as yet in Kentucky as they have elsewhere south of us? Is it a lack of leadership? On the average, are the attitudes of the populace receptive to desegregation?

My final conclusion and question focuses on the necessity of preventing further growth of the White Citizens Councils in Kentucky. They are uncomfortable to behold and sometimes powerful. Integration procedures must operate so as to advance the cause without creating such vicious opposition.

Chronology of the School Desegregation Crisis in Sturgis, Ky.

August 31 to September 19, 1956

August 31: Eight Negro students enrolled at the previously all-white Sturgis High School. One of these students stated that approval had been given to her on the previous day by Supt. Oakley in Morganfield in the presence of a grandparent. School Board approval had been given previously, though I cannot date this.

Sept. 4: The Negro enrollees returned home when their entrance to the High School was blocked by a crowd estimated at from 250 to 500 and described by some reporters as "peaceful" and by others as "a mob." Crowd later addressed by Supt. Oakley, who informed them of the School Board decision to admit Negroes at any time in compliance with the Supreme Court ruling, and requested them to let the matter be worked out by authorities of the school, city and county. There was no objection by the crowd when they were dispersed.

Sept. 5: Governor A. B. Chandler ordered State Police to Sturgis without conferring with local or county authorities. The Governor also ordered Adjutant General Williams to fly to Sturgis and survey the situation. The 240th Tank Battalion of the Kentucky National Guard was alerted for immediate duty.

Sept. 5: None of the Negro students attempted to enter the school. Union County school authorities and Sturgis City officials conferred with the parents of the Negro students, explained their plan to eliminate the Dunbar School next year, and obtained from these parents an agreement to send their children to this Negro school in Morganfield for this year.

Sept. 5: At a meeting with City and County officials and school authorities, Gen. Williams was told they did not believe the Guard was necessary to maintain law and order, in view of the agreement with the Negro parents.

Sept. 5: During the evening the Negro families were informed by radio and television that the troops were moving in, so that any eligible children who wished to attend could do so. The parents involved informed city officials of Sturgis that they intended to send their children to the local school.

Sept. 6: The Negro students entered the school under heavy armed guard; 200 Guardsmen in full battle dress, including two M-47 tanks, were on hand along with 20 State Police. A crowd of 800 was on hand; angry tempers flared and seven arrests were made.

Sept. 6: Audience of at least 500 addressed by W. W. Waller of Morganfield and Millard Grubbs of Louisville, an official of the Kentucky White Citizens Council. Integration in the local high school was protested.

Sept. 7: None of the Negro students appeared at the school, allegedly because threats of loss of jobs had been directed at the fathers who worked in a nearby coal mine. Attendance at the school was but 50 per cent of normal.

Sept. 10: Seven of the Negro students returned to school under escort of the militia; about 50 white students attended.

Sept. 11: Seven Negroes again attended the Sturgis High under military protection.

Sept. 12, 13, 14: The Negro students continued to attend school under military protection; attendance of white students increased until it was up to nearly 90 per cent by the 14th. Crowds around the school diminished and tension lessened.

Sept. 15: At Morganfield, the county seat of Union County, a crowd of more than 200 persons assembled on short notice to hear W. W. Waller, Jr. and others advocate a white boycott of the Sturgis High School. Waller is president of the Union County chapter of the Kentucky White Citizens Council.

Sept. 17: Four Negro children barred from entering Clay school as result of interpretation by Attorney General Ferguson that such attendance was not legal since the School Board of Webster County had made no definite plans for integration. Total boycott at Clay among white students came to an end and students began to return.

Sept. 17: Negro students in attendance at Sturgis, but attendance of whites went down sharply from Friday, apparently in response to the success (seemingly) of the Clay boycott and the pressures created in the community by the WCC meeting on Saturday night, Sept. 15.

Sept. 17: Crowd of perhaps 2500 attended meeting at Sturgis Fairgrounds called by the White Citizens Council of Union County. W. W. Waller of Morganfield in charge; Mayor Clark of Clay was the principal speaker. He urged them to use the same methods as they had used in Clay. Other speakers included Supt. Oakley and Principal Evans. Only speaker in support of compliance with the Supreme Court ruling was Mayor J. B. Holeman of Sturgis.

Sept. 18: Negro students again present, but white attendance down to about 50.

Sept. 18: Union County School Board requested opinion of Attorney General as to application in Sturgis case of the ruling applied to Clay. (See 13 above.) Reply was favorable.

Sept. 18: School Board at a special meeting voted to bar Negro students from Sturgis on grounds of being illegally enrolled. Integration committee requested to meet on Oct. 6 and to continue until satisfactory plan formed.

Sept. 19: Negro students appeared at school: Principal Evans read them the School Board action. Crowd of several hundred present cheered their departure. White students began returning to school. Negroes did not return to Dunbar and indicated they were not sure they would do so.

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